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S E C R E T RANGOON 000860

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [BM](#) [ASSK](#) [NLD](#)

SUBJECT: MP S-ELECT SHARE THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS

Classified By: COM CARMEN M. MARTINEZ FOR REASON 1.5(D).

11. (S) Summary: MPs-elect told us July 18 that they expect Aung San Suu Kyi to be released fairly soon, that the party remains strong and its members dedicated and loyal, and that they hope to avoid any "sporadic" anti-regime action that could serve as a pretext for an even tougher crackdown on the pro-democracy movement. If and when the NLD acts, the MPs continued, it would be on a coordinated, nation-wide basis. The British Embassy here has heard talk of NLD plans to declare a parallel government. End Summary.

12. (S) Emboffs, accompanied by a British diplomat, met in Rangoon July 18 with five Members of Parliament Elect (i.e., elected in the junta-annulled 1990 election). Four are provincial-level NLD leaders and one is a member of the Party for National Democracy (the party of Aung San Suu Kyi's first cousin and prime minister of the NCGUB, Dr. Sein Win). Two of the five were recently released from detention after being arrested in the post-May 30th crackdown on the NLD. A brief recap of significant points follows:

-- They do not expect ASSK will be imprisoned for a long period, as international and domestic pressure is building on the regime to release her.

-- The local party members remain dedicated and "are willing to gather and strike if we ask them."

-- The party has yet to take any concerted action, as the members await direction from its leaders. "We have pledged ourselves to Aung San Suu Kyi and U Aung Shwe and would not want to do anything against their wishes."

-- If, however, ASSK and U Aung Shwe are not soon released, the provincial-level leadership will meet to coordinate national policy.

-- They say any anti-regime action must be national and coordinated. They fear that sporadic violence, particularly in Rangoon or Mandalay, could spark an even harsher military crackdown on democracy supporters.

-- The SPDC claims ASSK provoked the "clash" of May 30th and planned some violence in Rangoon in an attempt to spur a general uprising, they explained. The MPs-elect are concerned that some student hotheads may play into the SPDC's hands by undertaking scattered violent acts.

-- Overall, the MPs said they welcomed the events since May 30th, as they might prove to be a catalyst for positive change. One of those recently released said somewhat ruefully, "Experience can be a wonderful teacher, but lately the school fees have been very high."

13. (C) The British diplomat afterwards told us she had heard from other MPs-elect that some MPs-elect are considering announcing a parallel government. (We have heard the same, but only third-hand.) She added that in her recent discussions with Thailand-based anti-regime youths, it is apparent that some leaders are pressing for direct action and now reject any hope of resumed "dialogue." These young people have taken heart "from the language of the bill your Congress just passed," she said.

14. (C) COMMENT: We note that the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act includes the sentence, "The policy of the United States, as articulated by the President on April 24, 2003, is to officially recognize the NLD as the legitimate representative of the Burmese people as determined by the 1990 election." We will seek to provide measured advice to any MPs-elect who might be considering declaring a parallel government on the basis of this or other statements. End Comment.
Martinez